



# Your CT Colonography scan

at Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust

## What is a CT colonography scan?

CT stands for Computerised Tomography. A CT scan uses x-rays to take detailed pictures of the inside of your body. It can help us find the cause of your problem and help identify the best treatment options for you. Colonography means that the examination will be focused on your colon (large bowel). During the procedure gas will be used to inflate your colon via a small flexible tube inserted into your back passage. When there is enough gas in the colon, images will be taken with you lying in two different positions (on your back and front). If you are unable to lie in either of these positions the radiographers (x-ray technicians) will adapt the technique to ensure the best comfort for you. You may be given an injection of a muscle relaxant to avoid bowel spasm.

## How should I prepare for my scan?

You or the team looking after you if you are an Inpatient will be sent full instructions for the necessary preparation for this scan. You will need to follow a low fibre diet for 2 days before the scan, and be given some laxative tablets (to empty the colon) as well as a special drink which shows up on x-rays.

Sometimes we may also need to give you an injection of contrast dye during the scan, to help us see your internal organs and blood vessels. For this injection and the muscle relaxant you will need a small plastic tube (cannula) inserted into a vein in your arm.

You will need to wear a hospital gown for the procedure.

## Having your scan...

The radiographer will explain the test and answer any questions you may have before proceeding with the examination.

The scanner looks like a large doughnut; you will not be enclosed in a tunnel. You will go into the scanner feet first. Your radiographer will be in the room with you whilst the gas is going into your colon. They will be behind a screen whilst scanning but they will be able to see and hear you at all times.

When scanning the CT machine will simply make a noise, the couch will move and you will be asked to hold your breath for a few seconds as each picture is taken. If you are having a contrast dye injection, you might have a hot flush and get a metallic taste in your mouth. These sensations are normal and pass within moments.



## After your scan...

You will return home or to the ward (if an Inpatient) and you will be able to eat and drink as normal for you. Spicy and rich food should be avoided for a couple of days, to ensure no more laxative effect from the laxatives. You may be advised by the radiographer or nursing team to drink some extra fluid.

The examination results will be sent to the doctor who asked for you to have this procedure.

## Risks / benefits

As CT scanning involves using x-rays, there are the usual minimal risks associated with radiation. The amount of radiation used is more than standard x-rays of the body, however the increased risk is very small and the benefits of having the scan greatly outweigh the risk. A CT scan will show much more detail than an ordinary x-ray.

## Alternatives

### Advice Lines For CT enquiries:

**Royal Sussex County 01273 664926**

**Princess Royal and Hurstwood Park 01444 441881 Ext. 5719**

### Reference for further information

<http://urlm.co.uk/www.goingfora.com>

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#### Disclaimer

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

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